

MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of a **MEETING** of the **REGULATORY COMMITTEE** held on 27 November 2018 at 10.30 am

Present

Councillors

D R Coren (Chairman)
R J Chesterton, Mrs G Doe, T G Hughes,
L D Taylor and R Wright

Apologies

Councillor(s)

Mrs F J Colthorpe, S G Flaws and D J Knowles

Also Present

Officer(s):

Simon Newcombe (Group Manager for Public Health and Regulatory Services), Jeremy Pritchard (Lead Officer Commercial Team), Thomas Keating (Specialist Lead (Licensing) Officer), Philip Langdon (Solicitor) and Carole Oliphant (Member Services Officer)

8 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (00.01.04)

Apologies received from Cllr S G Flaws, Cllr Mrs F J Colthorpe and Cllr D J Knowles.

9 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT (00.01.57)

There were no declarations made.

10 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (00.02.01)

There were no members of public present.

11 MINUTES (00.02.25)

The minutes of the Regulatory Committee Meeting held on 9th October 2018 were agreed as a true record and duly signed by the Chairman.

12 HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE POLICY (00.02.55)

The Committee received details of the revised Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy from the Specialist Lead (Licensing) Officer who explained that the Policy was due for review after three years.

He explained the main changes to the policy which included:

1. Safeguarding - The plan was to ensure that all existing taxi licence holders received Safeguarding training by June 2019 and that new licence holders had to have received training within 12 months of getting their license.

2. The Equality Act – The authority could now maintain a register of all wheelchair accessible vehicles. In addition, exemptions for drivers not able to accommodate guide dogs or give reasonable assistance to wheelchair users had been clarified.
3. English tests – The existing policy did not detail the exact testing or level of English expected. This had been clarified in the updated policy.
4. Previous convictions – The revised policy had adopted the Institute of Licensing document which aimed to align the standards across all licensing authorities.

The Specialist Lead (Licensing) Officer explained that the revised policy had gone out for consultation over a 10 week period and had received one response. This was from the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association who had made several helpful comments. The main one outstanding was that they requested that it became a mandatory requirement for taxi drivers to undertake training on disability equality. He explained that training would be investigated and a report brought to a future meeting.

There was a general discussion about the way in which applicants with previous convictions had been handled and the Committee welcomed the guidance from the Institute of Licensing.

He outlined the following recommendations as a result of the review and all of the recommendations were supported without changes.

It was therefore **RESOLVED** that:

1. The revised policy was adopted and has effect from 1 January 2019.

(Proposed by Cllr Mrs G Doe and seconded by Cllr T G Hughes)

2. Delegated Authority be given to the Specialist Lead (Licensing) Officer or the Team Leader (Commercial Team), in conjunction with the Group Manager for Public Health and Regulatory Services to decide which safeguarding awareness training shall be acceptable. This was to ensure that alternative arrangements could be made for training as necessary.

(Proposed by Cllr R Wright and seconded by Cllr Mrs G Doe)

3. Delegated Authority be given to the following officers to decide if a driver can be exempt from duties required under the Equality Act 2010:
 - a. The Group Manager for Public Health and Regulatory Services;
 - b. Team Leader (Commercial Team);
 - c. Specialist Lead (Licensing);
 - d. Specialist Officers (Licensing).

(Proposed by Cllr T G Hughes and seconded by Cllr R Wright)

4. Delegated Authority be given to the Specialist Lead (Licensing) Officer or the Team Leader (Commercial Team), in conjunction with the Group Manager for Public Health and Regulatory Services to decide which speaking and listening

English test shall be used to assess applicants and licence holder's level of English. This is to ensure alternative arrangements can be made if necessary.

(Proposed by Cllr Mrs G Doe and seconded by Cllr T G Hughes)

(The meeting ended at 11.27 am)

CHAIRMAN